



# SHAMBHALA

**THE SHAMBHALA CODE OF CONDUCT**

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# SHAMBHALA

## The Shambhala Code of Conduct

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This Code of Conduct applies to everyone present in any activity associated with Shambhala, in person or online, regardless of where the activity occurs.

### THE PRACTICES OF GOOD CONDUCT

1. **Treat all with respect and work for the welfare of all.** Be law-abiding and decent. Be true to your relationships. Avoid harming others.
2. **Practice** disciplines that benefit you and others. Take responsibility for your state of mind.
3. **Be genuine, curious, and truthful.** Listen to others. Do not manipulate or slander others. Communicate your limitations or your willingness to help gently and thoughtfully.
4. **Care for everyone's well-being.** Be kind and generous to all without prejudice. Identify and interrupt aggression or intimidation by others in the environment.
5. **Be particularly caring and respectful in intimate relationships** where vulnerabilities are shared.
6. **Learn from each other.** Support each other with curiosity and friendliness. Work together to mutually maintain a healthy and open community and cultivate good human society.
7. **Give kind and honest feedback.** Be open to receiving feedback from others.
8. **Be true to your inspiration.** Bring your unique perspective and talents to the community and appreciate others'. Enjoy yourself. Don't be afraid to take a risk.

9. **Clean up after yourself.** Take responsibility for your own decisions, communication and actions. Admit your mistakes and learn from them.
10. **Be decent and trustworthy.** Do not waver in meeting your obligations. Take from others only what is freely offered.
11. **Be respectful and accountable** with regard to the use of shared or community resources. Treat Shambhala's resources or wealth with integrity, intelligence, and transparency.
12. **Consume only what you need.** Respect the planet and all of its inhabitants.
13. **Recognize ways that alcohol and drugs can negatively affect our behaviour and** share the responsibility to protect harmony and dignity in the social environment.
14. **Recognize that any position of power or authority is a privilege and a responsibility** to humbly serve the well-being of others.
15. **Honour your vows and your commitments** to practice and study with fellow practitioners. Continue an active ongoing relationship with a meditation instructor or someone who helps you reflect on your path.
16. **Make the teachings and community accessible** to all by identifying and reducing barriers to participation. Support an environment that is free from discrimination of any kind.
17. **Honour the process of learning** about life, respecting teachers of all wisdom traditions and all who seek wisdom.

## **PROTECTING THE SPACE FOR EVERYONE**

Misconduct can seriously damage the quality of community life, have significant impact on ourselves and others, and can even break the law. All Shambhala members, friends, and others who identify as part of the Shambhala community should refrain from misconduct, as described below, at all times. In order to protect the space for everyone, the following behaviours are considered misconduct:

1. Harassment, bullying, verbal abuse, violent or physically aggressive behaviour.
2. Discrimination against an individual or group compared to another on the basis of actual or perceived gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, country of origin, nationality, citizenship status, native language, physical appearance, physical, mental or perceptual abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or level of practice (see Diversity, Inclusivity and Anti-discrimination Policy)
3. Sexual abuse and sexual harassment (see Policy to Address Sexual Misconduct)
- 4.

4. Sexual activity in the context of any activity associated with Shambhala between a person 18 years of age or older and a person under the age of 18 is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense (see Child Protection Policy).
5. To compel or manipulate another person to:
  - 5.1 Compromise their legal, ethical or personal boundaries;
  - 5.2 Consent to a sexual relationship that is not freely chosen; or
  - 5.3 Offer gifts or personal favours not of their own free will.
6. To initiate or consent to an intimate relationship with anyone in the context of a meditation instructor-student relationship. (see Policy on Conduct of People Holding Positions of Authority).
7. In the context of a specific program, class or meeting associated with Shambhala, people holding positions of authority to initiate or consent to an intimate relationship with any participant or program staff subject to that authority in that context. This prohibition also applies to Shambhala staff at the location where that program, class or meeting takes place. (see Policy on Conduct of People Holding Positions of Authority).
8. Misappropriation or theft of Shambhala resources or wealth.

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**Anyone may report any concern or misconduct**, and will be supported in doing so. Concerns and complaints are a way to help us fearlessly grow as a community.

*If you are unclear about what is good conduct or what is misconduct, please ask for, or download the Shambhala Code of Conduct policies. Details on how to raise a concern can be found on the [Code of Conduct Hub](#).*

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**Review Date:** Shambhala Day, 2022.

**Approved By:** Shambhala Board of Directors.

# 1. Policy on Child Protection

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## 1. Why have a Child Protection Policy in Shambhala?

A Child Protection Policy (the “CPP”) aims to ensure that the growing minds and bodies of children are respected, and that each child be protected from abuse. Adults in Shambhala must set an example for children of care and behaviour we want for future generations.

## 2. To whom does the CPP apply?

**2.1 Scope and application:** The prohibited conduct in Section 3 applies to everyone. Unless otherwise noted, the other provisions of the CPP apply to everyone who participates in an activity associated with Shambhala where children are present or involved. Except for Section 3 misconduct, the CPP does not address programs or activities unrelated to Shambhala carried out or sponsored by individuals or members of Shambhala.

**2.2 Effective date:** The effective date of the CPP is February 26, 2020 (the “Effective Date”), and it shall apply only to complaints arising due to events and circumstances occurring on or after the Effective Date.

**2.3 Amendments to the CPP:** This CPP may be amended at any time by the Board of Directors of Shambhala based upon a review by the Office of Community Care and Conduct.

### 2.4 Defined Terms:

- a. **Child:** The age of adulthood varies in different locations and countries. For the purposes of this policy the term “child” will refer to a person under the age of 18, regardless of the local legal age of majority.
- b. **Adult:** “Adult” refers to a person 18 years of age or over.
- c. **Sexual activity:** “Sexual activity” includes sex and any interaction between a child and adult in which the child is used for sexual stimulation. This can include both touching and non-touching behaviors occurring either in person or online. Non-touching behaviors can include *voyeurism*, exhibitionism, or exposing the child to pornography.
- d. **Shambhala activities:** For purposes of this policy, “Shambhala activity” means a program or activity carried out under the name or auspices of, or sponsored by, Shambhala, whether or not held in a Shambhala location.

- e. **Shambhala location:** For purposes of this policy, “Shambhala location” means any physical location owned or leased by (i) Shambhala Canada Society or Shambhala USA or (ii) any entity or organization subsidiary to, or affiliated with, Shambhala Canada Society or Shambhala USA (e.g., Shambhala Europe GmbH).

### **3. Child sexual abuse prohibited**

For purposes of this Child Protection Policy, **sexual activity in the context of any activity associated with Shambhala between a person 18 years of age or older and a person under the age of 18 is prohibited** regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense.

### **4. What to do in the event of allegations of child sexual abuse**

**4.1 Reporting Potential Child Sexual Abuse:** Anyone who has knowledge of, witnesses, or develops concerns or reasonable suspicions regarding child sexual abuse in any activity associated with Shambhala, must report such concerns according to procedures 4.2 - 4.7.

4.2 If the person with knowledge or concerns believes this matter would be subject to mandatory reporting, then report immediately to local authorities, which may be law enforcement and/or child protection agencies as prescribed in local law. The matter should then be reported to centre or group leadership. If the person with knowledge or concerns is uncertain whether the matter is subject to mandatory reporting, they must report the matter first to centre or group leadership.

#### **Procedures to follow by Centre or group leadership:**

4.3 Determine if there is a mandatory reporting requirement and immediately report the incident to appropriate authorities if that has not already occurred.

4.4 If there is suspicion of a crime, then the matter shall be reported to the appropriate authorities whether there is a mandatory reporting requirement or not.

4.5 The child’s parents or guardians shall be notified as soon as possible; if there is no mandatory reporting requirement, and it does not appear that a crime has been committed, then the child’s parents or guardians will determine if the matter is reported to law enforcement and outside agencies.

4.6 Maintain careful records of interviews, statements, and other evidence and maintain these records of the above in a confidential file for use by the appropriate authorities.

4.7 Notify the Director of Community Care and Conduct of the above.

## **GUIDELINES**

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### **5. Guidelines for people assigned responsibility for children in any activity associated with Shambhala**

**5.1 Compliance with law:** All Shambhala centres, groups, and individuals offering programs involving children are responsible for complying with local laws and regulations regarding children, including mandatory reporting requirements. Centres, including locations that are not Shambhala centres, may adopt child protection policies that are stricter than the CPP and in that case, the stricter rules will apply. However, where there is no local policy or the local policy is less strict, then the CPP provision shall apply.

**5.2 Decorum:** People assigned responsibility for children should respect the developmental age of the children/youth in behaviours and activities. While caring for children, the people assigned responsibility for working with them must refrain from intoxication, including through the use of unprescribed medications, drugs or alcohol of any kind, and from inappropriate or obscene language or behaviours.

**5.3 Staff ratios:** It is recommended that two adults be present at all times with children to provide care and supervision. If there is a ratio of adult caregivers to children that is required by local law, it must be followed. Young people, who are also children, are welcome to assist, but the overall care is the responsibility of the assigned adult(s).

**5.4 Record keeping:** It is required that all programs keep a record of which adults were responsible for activities with children.

**5.5 Background checks:** It is required for those people who are assigned responsibility for working with children to undergo a background check (See background check protocol).



**Additional guidelines for people assigned responsibility for children in residential programs:**

5.6 **Compliance with law:** All residential programs involving children, conducted, sponsored, or hosted by Shambhala or on Shambhala properties shall comply with local laws and regulations. A centre or group, through the director or coordinator of a residential program, is required to know the relevant local laws and regulations and to inform all staff of them at the beginning of the program.

5.7 Residential programs for children, for example Sun Camp, shall adopt, maintain and enforce specific and additional guidelines related to the conduct of staff, volunteers, and guests. These guidelines shall be maintained on file and updated with the Director of Community Care and Conduct.

5.8 In residential programs, emergency procedures and responses must be clearly in place in accordance with local laws.

**6. Guidelines where people have a history of abuse of children**

6.1 **History of abuse:** These guidelines are intended to assist everyone to develop healthy and appropriate boundaries in their relationships, and to ensure the safety of children.

6.2 **Self-reporting:** If anyone has a public record of allegations and/or convictions of abuse of children, and they are, or will be, in any Shambhala activity, they are required to self-report to centre or group leadership. This self report will allow a centre or group to work in a confidential and considerate manner regarding their participation in activities when children are present.

6.3 **Reporting concerns involving others:** If anyone becomes aware that a person with a public record of allegations and/or convictions of abuse of children is attending any activity associated with Shambhala, they should ask the person to self-report and to let them know when that report has been made. This request is mutual sharing of responsibility for each other and everyone's well-being. If the person with a public record of allegations and/or convictions of abuse of children does not self-report, then anyone with knowledge of their public record has a responsibility to report that information to Centre leadership in a confidential manner.

**6.4 Follow up procedures:**

- a. Where a report has been made about a person with a public record of allegations and/or convictions of abuse of children, local leadership must notify the Director of

Community Care and Conduct. Director of Community Care and Conduct and local leadership will discuss before proceeding further.

- b. Where there has been a conviction or allegations have been confirmed or self-reported, a meeting will be arranged involving (a) the person with the history of abuse of children, and if that person wishes, a support person of their choice, and (b) at least two people in attendance representing the centre or group leadership.
- c. In this meeting, the person will be required to sign a confidential agreement regarding the conditions under which they may or may not participate in Shambhala activities in which children are present. This agreement (see CPP Agreement Form) will be kept on file locally and with the Director of Community Care and Conduct.
- d. If signing an agreement is not acceptable to the person with a public record of allegations and/or convictions of abuse of children, they will not be permitted to participate in any Shambhala activities or be present in Shambhala locations, subject to review by the Director of Community Care and Conduct.
- e. Leadership in local Shambhala communities and the Director of Community Care and Conduct will respect the need for confidentiality and respectful communication for everyone involved.

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**Approved on:** February 23, 2020.

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**Approved By:** Shambhala Board of Directors.

## 2. Policy on Conduct of People Holding Positions of Authority

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### 1. Why have a policy for the conduct of those holding positions of authority in Shambhala?

When you hold a position of authority in Shambhala, you have a greater responsibility to live by the Code of Conduct and support the spiritual and temporal well-being of the community. You represent Shambhala. Your conduct is a manifestation of your understanding of the principles of the Shambhala teachings. Misconduct on your part will affect yourself and others significantly and can damage Shambhala.

### 2. To whom does this policy apply?

**2.1 Scope and Application:** The policy applies to everyone holding a position of authority in any activity associated with Shambhala in person or online, regardless of where the activity occurs.

**2.2 Effective date:** The effective date is **Shambhala Day 2021** and it shall apply to events and circumstances occurring on or after the Effective Date.

**2.3 Amendments:** This policy may be amended at any time by the Board of Directors of Shambhala based upon a review by the Office of Community Care and Conduct.

#### 2.4 Defined terms

**2.4.1 People holding a position of authority:** people who have been empowered by Shambhala at any level to exercise authority over other people, assets or resources in any activity associated with Shambhala. Positions of authority may be temporary or situational, such as those held for the duration of a program or event. A timekeeper or Open House host is, from the perspective of participants, a person holding a position of authority.

**2.4.2 Activity associated with Shambhala:** program, class, meeting and any activity carried out under the name or auspices of, or sponsored by, Shambhala, regardless of where it takes place.

**2.4.3 Meditation instructor-student relationship:** relationship involving meetings specifically for the purpose of meditation or practice instruction which is requested and accepted and which ends ninety days after both parties acknowledge it has ended.

### **3. What is your responsibility?**

You have a responsibility to relate with awareness and insight to the power that derives from your position, and with increasing sensitivity to the impact of your use of power. All the responsibilities set out for the Shambhala community in the Code of Conduct apply to you, and *in addition* to:

**3.1** Recognize that the influence you have as a result of your position is a privilege, and to use that influence only for the service and well-being of others to empower others and benefit society.

**3.2** Avoid using your influence to benefit yourself or to limit others' access to opportunities, resources, and the right to make their own decisions.

**3.3** Maintain diligently your own path of practice and study.

**3.4** Set an example through your behaviour, in how you relate with others.

**3.5** Foster an open, supportive, and encouraging environment for learning, practice, and community engagement where anyone with a concern can enter into a constructive dialogue, or, if necessary, report their concern or complaint honestly.

**3.6** Manage any assets or resources belonging to an entity associated with Shambhala, with integrity, intelligence, and full transparency, and direct these to generate the greatest benefit.

**3.7** Declare any conflicts of interest, or any other fact that would impair your ability to serve in a position of authority.

## 4. Misconduct

In addition to the defined misconduct in the Code of Conduct, people in positions of authority in Shambhala have a commitment not to exploit their position for their own benefit. Depending on its severity, your misconduct may limit your privilege to hold an official position of authority in Shambhala, or to participate in some or all activities associated with Shambhala.

The following behaviours are considered misconduct:

**4.1** At any time, to compel or manipulate another person to:

**4.1.1** Compromise their legal, ethical or personal boundaries.

**4.1.2** Consent to a sexual relationship that is not freely chosen.

**4.1.3** Offer gifts or personal favours not of their own free will.

**4.2** in the context of a meditation instructor-student relationship (as defined above in 2.4.3), to initiate or consent to an intimate relationship with anyone.

**4.3 In the context of a specific program, class or meeting associated with Shambhala**, people holding positions of authority to *initiate or consent to* an intimate relationship with any participant or program staff **subject to that authority in that context**. This prohibition also applies to Shambhala staff at the location where that program, class or meeting takes place.

**4.3.1** The following are exempted from the scope of number 4.3:

- a. Pre-existing and ongoing consensual relationships between adults; and
- b. initiation of relationships involving people in positions of authority in Shambhala who are participating in the program, class or meeting solely as participants on an equal footing with other participants.

## 5. The Oath of Commitment

All people in positions of authority are required to in writing to accept and abide by these principles.

*I commit myself to refrain from all misconduct in this Policy Governing People in Positions of Authority and the Shambhala Code of Conduct and to carry out to the best of my ability the behaviours in the Path of Good Conduct.*

**Full name:**

**Date of birth** (*this is required for clear identification*):

**Position title:**

**Date:**

**Signature:**

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**Approved on:** July 12, 2020.

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**Review Date:** Shambhala Day, 2022.

**Approved By:** Shambhala Board of Directors.

## 3. Policy to Address Sexual Misconduct

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### 1. Why have a policy to address sexual misconduct in Shambhala?

This Sexual Misconduct Policy supports the community's commitment to creating and maintaining a diverse and open community which embodies principles of consent and respect to address sexual misconduct.

Shambhala includes many people with different backgrounds and cultures, and the Code of Conduct endeavours to clarify and set standards for appropriate behaviour across different ethnic and national cultures. A Shambhala vision of good human society is based on mutual care and respect which encompasses refraining from sexual misconduct.

As a society of people relating to people, physical attraction and romantic and sexual relationships are natural, yet certain power dynamics and positions can make it inappropriate or harmful to pursue sexual relations. Shambhala is part of a broader world in which power imbalances and sexual misconduct occur. Anyone may experience sexual harm, and this is more likely for women, LGBTQI people, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, and conditions of social oppression.

People who experience sexual misconduct can suffer anxiety, depression, debilitating stress, loss of self-esteem and a sense of unworthiness. Sexual misconduct can severely affect people's lives, including being turned away from their spiritual path and the teachings. Even for those who are not directly involved, sexual misconduct creates stress in the environment and has negative effects on community culture, damaging its reputation and leaving it open to disputes and litigation.

In order to create safe spaces in which people can come to learn about meditation and connect with their basic goodness, Shambhala needs to address sexual misconduct as a community. For this to happen, **everyone in the community needs to read and reflect on this policy, recognize what sexual misconduct is, refrain from it, be empowered to interrupt it and know how to report it.**

Unhealthy gender dynamics are at the root of sexual misconduct and everyone is encouraged to engage in additional awareness training.

## 2. To whom does this policy apply?

**2.1 Scope and application:** The policy applies to everyone who is present and engages in any activity associated with Shambhala in person or online, regardless of where the activity occurs.

Additionally, everyone in a position of authority has a particular responsibility to refrain from sexual misconduct and maintain a social environment that addresses and discourages sexual misconduct.

**2.2 Effective date:** The effective date is **Shambhala Day 2021** and it shall apply to events and circumstances occurring on or after the Effective Date.

**2.3 Amendments:** This policy may be amended at any time by the Board of Directors of Shambhala based upon a review by the Office of Community Care and Conduct.

## 2.4 Defined Terms

**2.4.1 Sexual Misconduct** is a broad term encompassing unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is committed **without consent** (as defined below in 2.4.5).

Sexual misconduct includes *sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct by people in positions of authority*. Sexual misconduct may vary in its severity and consists of a range of behaviors or attempted behaviors.

Sexual misconduct can be committed by anyone towards anyone regardless of their sex, gender, gender identity or gender expression. It can occur between strangers or acquaintances, including people involved in an intimate or sexual relationship.

**2.4.2 Sexual Abuse** is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual abuse is a broad term which includes a number of acts such as rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with a child, and child on child abuse.

**2.4.2.1 Sexual assault** includes a range of conduct, from actual or attempted forcible intercourse of any kind to any pressure that compels an individual to engage in sexual activity **when consent** (as defined below in 2.4.5) **is not present**.

Sexual assault is a crime, a violation of bodily integrity and sexual autonomy and **is broader than the concept of rape**. It includes intentional contact with the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals, or touching another with any of these body parts, or the



use of coercion, manipulation, or force, to make someone else touch you or themselves with, or on, any of these body parts.

#### **2.4.2.2 Child sexual abuse as defined in Shambhala** (See Child Protection Policy).

**2.4.3 Sexual harassment** is unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, verbal or physical conduct or gestures of a sexual nature. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, harassment can take the form of a single incident.

#### **2.4.4 Sexual Misconduct by People in Positions of Authority.**

People in positions of authority must not exploit the trust relationship by:

2.4.4.1 Compelling or manipulating a person to compromise their personal boundaries, or consent to a sexual relationship that is not freely chosen.

2.4.4.2 To initiate or consent to an intimate relationship with anyone in the context of a meditation instructor-student relationship.

2.4.4.3 **In the context of a specific program, class or meeting associated with Shambhala, to *initiate or consent to* an intimate relationship with any participant or program staff **subject to that authority in that context.**** This prohibition also applies to Shambhala staff at the location where that program, class or meeting takes place.

The following are exempted from the scope of number 2.4.4.3:

- a. Pre-existing and ongoing consensual relationships between adults; and
- b. initiation of relationships involving people in positions of authority in Shambhala who are participating in the program, class or meeting solely as participants on an equal footing with other participants.

#### **2.4.5 Consent and lack of consent**

2.4.5.1 For the purposes of this policy, **consent** is the freely and affirmatively communicated willingness to participate in particular sexual activity or behaviour, expressed by language or clear, unambiguous actions.

1. It is the responsibility of the person who wants to engage in sexual activity to ensure that consent is obtained from the other person.

2. Lack of protest or resistance does not mean consent, nor does silence mean consent. For that reason, relying solely on nonverbal communication can lead to misunderstanding.
3. The existence of a past or present sexual relationship between the people involved does not imply consent to future sexual acts.
4. Consent must be present throughout the sexual activity—at any time, a person can communicate a desire to stop the activity.
5. Consent to one form of sexual activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity.
6. If there is confusion as to whether someone has consented or continues to consent to sexual activity, the activity must stop until each consents to it.
7. Consent is not procured by the use of physical force, compelling threats, intimidating behavior, or coercion.
8. In certain power dynamics, it is not possible to give or obtain consent. (See Policy for Conduct of Those in Positions of Authority).

#### **2.4.5.2 People who are unable to give consent**

Under this policy, the following persons are assumed to be unable to give consent: people who are asleep, unconscious, or involuntarily restrained physically; people who are unable to communicate consent due to a mental or physical condition or disability; persons under the age of 18; persons whose judgement is impaired or who are physically incapacitated due to the influence of alcohol or other drugs (AOD), including medication. Such incapacitation occurs when an individual under the influence of AOD is, at the time of the sexual activity, unable to understand what is happening or unable to control their own behavior. If an individual is under the influence of AOD or sleeping, consent cannot be freely and affirmatively communicated and is therefore not granted.

### **3. Misconduct**

3.1 Sexual Misconduct: Sexual misconduct as defined by 2.4 (to include Sexual Abuse, Sexual harassment, and Sexual Misconduct by People in Positions of Authority) is considered misconduct.

3.2 Sexual abuse is prohibited by laws, and the details of those laws may vary across the world. Anyone who suffers sexual abuse is encouraged to report it to the police, the local sexual abuse hotline, or other appropriate authority. Another person who is aware of the abuse may also choose to report it.

3.3. Shambhala encourages anyone who experiences or witnesses sexual misconduct to use one of the options outlined in the document 'What to do if you have a concern in Shambhala'.

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## 4. Policy on Diversity, Inclusivity & Anti-Discrimination

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### 1. Why have a Diversity, Inclusivity and Anti-Discrimination Policy in Shambhala?

Shambhala is an international community and includes people of different cultures, languages, ethnicities, races, genders, gender identities or expressions, sexual orientations, ages, socio-economic statuses, countries of origin, nationalities, citizenship statuses, native languages, sizes, religious beliefs, spiritual practice, political beliefs, and physical, mental, and perceptual abilities.

In recognizing that we cannot avoid bringing dominant group social dynamics from society at large into Shambhala, it is our aspiration that as a community we become more aware of our blind spots and make the personal and organizational advances that create greater access to the teachings.

Each individual has the right to practice, study and work in Shambhala in an environment that is free from discrimination rooted in bias.

### 2. To whom does the Diversity, Inclusivity and Anti-Discrimination Policy apply?

**2.1 Scope and application:** The policy applies to everyone who is present and engages in any activity associated with Shambhala in person or online, regardless of where the activity occurs.

**2.2 Effective date:** The effective date is **Shambhala Day 2021** and it shall apply to events and circumstances occurring on or after the Effective Date.

**2.3 Amendments:** This policy may be amended at any time by the Board of Directors of Shambhala based upon a review by the Office of Community Care and Conduct.

#### 2.4 Defined Terms

**2.4.1 Diversity:** A variety of intersecting identities that make individuals unique, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, country of origin, nationality, citizenship status, native language, physical appearance, religious beliefs, political beliefs, level of practice, and physical, mental and perceptual abilities. Diversity

recognizes the uniqueness of individuals, populations, groups and their perspectives and experiences. This is not an exhaustive list.

**2.4.2 Inclusivity:** A conscious and deliberate decision to continuously work towards the creation of accepting and nurturing spaces where similarities and differences are respected, supported, and valued by promoting the active participation of the entire community.

**2.4.3 Accessibility:** The degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. The concept focuses on enabling access for people with differing needs, by removing barriers to receiving teachings and practicing as part of Shambhala.

**2.4.4 Discrimination:** Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual or group compared to another on the basis of actual or perceived gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, country of origin, nationality, citizenship status, native language, size, physical, mental or perceptual abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or level of practice.

## **2.5 Exemptions**

In some circumstances, Shambhala reserves the right to not admit or to ask a person to leave a program or event, or not register for or enter a program or event for reasons of reasonable prerequisites, participant safety or program disruption.

Additionally, where selection is made for a position, Shambhala reserves the right to reasonably apply criteria which may include physical or mental ability, languages spoken, background check, etc, based on the requirements of the position.

### **3. The Path of Inclusivity**

*Every human society has inherited conscious and unconscious patterns of discrimination against certain groups of people, generally based on fear, ignorance or greed. As a community, Shambhala must address culturally embedded positions of power and privilege, and bring awareness to their associated forms of discrimination, so that all people may participate according to their inspiration and ability. The social dynamics of dominant groups can negatively impact people whose social identities are underrepresented in Shambhala and/or marginalized in society.*

3.1 Welcome and treat each individual as unique and deserving of respect.

3.2 Make programs accessible to as many people as possible.

3.3 Unconditionally reject every form of bigotry, discrimination, and actions or words expressing hatred.

3.4 Recognize that people have intersecting identities, which means that individuals experience identity differently, within structures of inequality and/or privilege.

3.5 Explicitly address barriers to open communication, community building, and organizational development caused by views of existing hierarchies.

3.6 Promote active and regular engagement between diverse individuals and groups to explore difference and to develop mutual understanding in a safe and nurturing environment.

3.7 Encourage meaningful participation of diverse individuals in decision-making processes.

3.8 Commit to waking up and shifting social dynamics of dominant groups that negatively impact people who are underrepresented in Shambhala.

3.9 Set clear goals regarding diversity and inclusivity, and allocate efforts and resources to improving accessibility for all (See [Shambhala Accessibility Resources](#)).

#### **4. Accessible teachings and environments**

In Shambhala, we are committed to:

4.1 Make programs accessible to as many people as possible.

4.2 Set clear goals regarding diversity and inclusivity, and allocate efforts and resources to improving accessibility for all (See [Shambhala Accessibility Resources](#)).

#### **5. Misconduct**

5.1 Discrimination as defined in Section 2.4.4 is considered misconduct.

5.2 Shambhala encourages anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination to use one of the options outlined in the document "What to do if you have a concern in Shambhala".

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**Approved By:** Shambhala Board of Directors.